

Training Accreditation Council (TAC) Procedure

Course Accreditation/Reaccreditation

The Training Accreditation Council (TAC or the Council), under the *Vocational Education and Training (VET) Act 1996*, is responsible for making decisions regarding the accreditation of VET courses in accordance with the *Standards for VET Regulators 2015*. The TAC Secretariat within the Department of Education Services implements and manages the Course Accreditation Policy and Procedures on behalf of the Council and is responsible for ensuring that course accreditation applications are managed efficiently and in accordance with national standards.

This procedure sets out the actions to be taken by the TAC Secretariat in respect of applications for the accreditation or reaccreditation of courses.

The Council will only accredit courses that meet the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) Standards for Accredited Courses and the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

Submission of Applications

Applications for the accreditation/reaccreditation of vocational education and training (VET) courses can only be submitted by the course copyright owner. They must be submitted using the prescribed template ACC1 Application for Course Accreditation/Reaccreditation form located on the TAC website (www.tac.wa.gov.au). Applications must be submitted by email to taccourseaccreditation@des.wa.gov.au.

If an application for the reaccreditation of a course is made in writing to the Council at least three months before the expiry date of the existing course, the accreditation of the course continues automatically until the application is decided.

Review of Applications

The key steps involved in assessing course accreditation applications are outlined below. Further details are described in the Accreditation Application Process Flowchart.

TAC Secretariat staff will conduct an internal review of the application to ensure that all the necessary information needed to consider the application has been provided. The assessment of applications for course accreditation and reaccreditation is equally rigorous, and the same standards apply.

If the application is incomplete, the TAC Secretariat will request further information from the course owner. The information must be provided within 15 working days. If this is not received by the due date, or if the application does not meet the requirements, the application will be returned.

If the application is complete, it will be allocated to an Accreditation Reviewer (external auditor) for a desk audit against the Standards for Accredited Courses. The course owner will be informed in writing and given the opportunity to advise if there is a conflict of interest that would make it inadvisable for the Accreditation Reviewer to review the application.

The Accreditation Reviewer will have 10 working days to complete a review of the application and report the findings to the TAC Secretariat. TAC Secretariat staff and Accreditation Reviewers may contact any person or organisation deemed necessary to conduct a full assessment of the application.

If the application is not compliant with the Standards for Accredited Courses, the Accreditation Reviewer will report the non-compliances to the applicant, who will have 20 working days to respond. On receipt of the response, the Accreditation Reviewer will assess the additional evidence provided and determine whether it has addressed the non-compliances (Evidence Review).

When the review process is complete, the Accreditation Reviewer will report to the TAC Secretariat on whether the application is compliant or non-compliant with the Standards for Accredited Courses.

Consideration of Applications

The TAC Secretariat will submit the reviewed application to the next scheduled meeting of the Council for consideration. For each application, the Council will determine whether to approve the application, reject the application or allow a further opportunity for submission of additional evidence.

If the Council rejects an application for accreditation/reaccreditation, the Council will advise the applicant in writing of the reasons for the rejection.

If the Council approves an application for accreditation/reaccreditation, the accredited course will be listed on the National Register (training.gov.au). The applicant will be informed of the decision in writing and provided with a Certificate of Accreditation with the code and title of the accredited course and the period of accreditation granted. The Council will generally accredit courses for a period of five years, unless special circumstances warrant a lesser duration. Please note that the reaccredited courses will be allocated a new national code, and will be accredited from the expiry date of the existing course.

Applications will be handled in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness. This means that the Council will act fairly, impartially and without bias in making accreditation decisions.

Decisions, reasons and evidence on which decisions are based will be explained and are subject to review. Applicants will be given a fair hearing and an opportunity to present their case.

A course owner can appeal a Council decision about an accredited course. An appeal can only be brought on the grounds that in making the decision, the Council erred in its application of, or failed to apply criteria or procedures as outlined in the Council's established policies and procedures.

The appeal must be submitted in writing to the State Training Board within 21 calendar days of the day on which the appellant was first notified of the decision.

Further information on appeals against a decision of the Council is available on the State Training Board website at www.stb.wa.gov.au.

Ongoing Monitoring and Maintenance

During the period of accreditation, course owners are required to:

- Inform the Council of changes to copyright ownership or changes to contact details of the copyright owner
- Monitor and evaluate the course in accordance with the process outlined in the accredited course document to ensure that the course continues to meet the current needs of industry/enterprise/the community
- Apply to amend the course if any changes are required, for example:
 - changes to course content, structure, assessment requirements or duration
 - changes to licensing or regulatory requirements
 - updates to imported units
- Inform RTOs registered to deliver the course of any changes approved by the Council
- Inform the Council if the course has been replaced by a training package qualification
- Ensure that no misleading statements are made about the accredited course, and
- Participate in strategic evaluations initiated by the Council as part of the continuous improvement of the VET system.

Related Documents

Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)

AQTF Standards for Accredited Courses and Users' Guide to the Standards

TAC Policy for Accreditation of VET Courses

TAC Procedures for:

- Amendment to Course Accreditation
- Extension of Course Accreditation

Vocational Education and Training Act 1996